

## REMARKS

### I. Status of the Claims

Claims 25, 26, 34-46, 48-50, 55, and 56 are currently pending. Applicants acknowledge, with appreciation, that in multiple telephone conversations, the Examiner has indicated that independent claims 39 and 48, and each claim dependent therefrom, are allowable. To advance prosecution, and in no way acquiescing to the correctness of the Examiner's conclusion over the remaining claims, i.e., claims 51-54, Applicants have canceled these claims without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter contained therein.

Applicants respectfully request that this Supplemental Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be entered by the Examiner, placing claims 25, 26, 34-46, and 48-50, 55, and 56 in condition for allowance. Applicants submit that the proposed amendment does not raise new issues or necessitate the undertaking of any additional search of the art by the Examiner, since all of the elements and their relationships claimed were either earlier claimed or inherent in the claims as examined. Therefore, this Amendment should allow for immediate action by the Examiner.

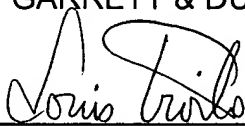
Furthermore, Applicants submit that the entry of the amendment would place the application in better form for appeal, should the Examiner dispute the patentability of the pending claims.

II. **Conclusion**

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and timely allowance of the pending claims. Please grant any necessary extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account no. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW,  
GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

By:  \_\_\_\_\_

Louis M. Troilo  
Reg. No. 45,284

Date: April 28, 2004